

**NEHALEM BAY FIRE AND RESCUE DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
AUGUST 12, 2021**

35375 HWY. 101 N, NEHALEM, OR 97131

I. CALL TO ORDER

As noted in the 08/16/2022 board minutes, the NBFRD Treasurer for FY 2021-22 was John Steele, not Robert Forster

President John Handler called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m. Persons in attendance were Vice President Mike Sims, Treasurer Bob Forster, Secretary Charles Bridge, Director John Steele, Fire Chief Chris Beswick, and Exec. Assistant Kristen Coyle.

II. WELCOME TO VISITORS

A. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no members of the public in attendance.

B. READING AND APPROVAL OF BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Handler asked the Board members if they had any corrections or comments after reviewing the minutes from the July 8, 2021 Board Meeting.

Sims made a motion to accept the minutes as printed. Bridge seconded the motion. Handler called for the question. Motion passed unanimously.

III. FINANCIAL REPORTS

The Board reviewed the Bills Paid, Visa Charges, and the Profit & Loss vs. Budget reports for the month of July. There were no questions about the detail provided.

Sims made a motion to approve the July 2021 financial reports as presented. Steele seconded. Handler called for the question. Motion passed unanimously.

IV. STAFF REPORTS

A. FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT

Chief Beswick provided the July incident statistics; there were 132 incidents making it the busiest month in the history of the District. Beswick made comments about public assistance and citizen complaints; there were a high number of lift assistance calls made as well as citizen complaints for Fourth of July fireworks and for burn complaints. There were a few brush fires for the month, and a structure fire which resulted in a total loss.

Beswick provided a volunteer update; there were no changes in headcount from last month. He noted that there is a volunteer on a leave of absence and a staff member who is on light duty. Both

individuals are part of the water rescue and rope rescue teams. He noted that one recruit, a former volunteer before the district was formed, has been signed off to join the water team prior to his recompletion of Fire Academy. Beswick noted that the closest mutual aid resource for water rescue is Seaside Fire and the Coast Guard.

Beswick provided possible methods to recruit new volunteers, including a residence program, an intern program, and a cadet program. Beswick provided a high-level map of an intern program and noted that this year's budget does not have the funds required. He also outlined what functions a cadet would and would not be able to perform. Discussion ensued regarding the methods, the limited pool of potential recruits given the District's demographics, lessons learned from previous recruiting methods, and volunteer programs at neighboring districts.

Beswick indicated that the District has qualified for some Covid-19 vaccination reimbursement, although not at the same amount per vaccine administered as public health providers. Beswick is anticipating the District's reimbursement to be around \$19,000.

Beswick provided an update with the Wildfire situation. Last week the brush truck was deployed on a pre-positioning assignment with one volunteer fire fighter, but it was not assigned to a conflagration and has returned.

Beswick provide an update with the ambulance service agreement and the County's ambulance contract. The EMS Advisory Council is near completion of the agreement; one of the recommended new provisions will establish an oversight committee, consisting of representatives from Adventist Hospital, the Fire Defense Board, and the County. The Board of Commissions seems to be taking notice of the contract delay. He is hopeful that a draft will be presented soon.

Beswick mentioned that the Nehalem Volunteer Firefighter's Association has had a booth at the Manzanita Farmers Market to sell its fundraising T-Shirts. Beswick indicated he assisted in the Booth one evening and realized it could be a community outreach opportunity for the District. He intends to share a booth with the Volunteer Firefighter's Association next season.

Beswick concluded his report by summarizing Governor Brown's new indoor mask mandate that goes into effect August 13th. To comply with the mandate, the district will once again close public access to the lobby and conduct administrative services on a by appointment only basis with masks required. No outside meetings will be allowed to take place, except for the ISC training schedule for the end of the month and the monthly City of Manzanita court sessions.

TRAINING REPORT

The July 2021 training report prepared by Division Chief/Training Officer Jesse Walsh was provided. Chief Beswick highlighted the acquired structure training burn, and he commented that it was the most thoroughly planned and executed of all the District training burns he has attended. Three other departments within Tillamook County participated. Beswick also highlighted the recruits' completion of a hazardous material operations course; this concludes the required training to obtain their Firefighter I certification.

Discussion ensued regarding the public's reaction to structure fires. Per Beswick, there were very few complaints regarding the acquired structure planned burn. He is aware of some comments made to the press regarding the incident structure fire, and he was not contacted by any news organization to provide facts and accounts of the incident. questioned by any news organization. Public complaints regarding the structure fire were limited. The Board discussed how the District should respond to inaccuracies noted in the press and social media.

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. STATE OF EMERGENCY STATUS

There were no unfinished items on the agenda. Chief Beswick that the District is still under the State of Emergency declared in 2020 due to the Covid-19 Pandemic.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. WILDLAND URBAN INTERFACE APPARATUS PROPOSAL

Beswick reminded the board that the District's Type I Engine 1314, was due for replacement during 2016 when it reached its 20-year service life. It has recently failed its annual pump test. At the same time, wildfire activity has intensified in recent years. The District's Type VI Brush Truck is its main apparatus deployed to combat wildfires. For wildfire purposes, the step above a Type VI apparatus is a Type III engine; this apparatus is not currently in the District's fleet. Beswick indicated that a Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) engine qualifies as a Type I structural protection engine but designed on a Type III chassis and can serve as a Type III engine on wildland fires. Price ranges for various engines are \$550,000 - \$600,000 for a Type I, \$340,000 - \$360,000 for a Type III, and \$440,000 - \$460,000 for a WUI.

Beswick provided possible options for replacing the Engine 1314 their pros and cons, and estimated costs

- Purchase a Type III Engine
 - Lower cost compared to a Type I
 - Provides extra wildland protection and response capability for our district.
 - Allows greater flexibility on conflagration deployments without leaving the District unprotected.
 - Limited compartment space / smaller water tank and pump
 - Not NFPA 1901 compliant as a structure pumper and therefore cannot replace Engine 1314.
 - Cost estimates provided assuming a \$350,000 loan nothing down 2.98% APR, 3,5,10, and 15-year options.
- Proactively pursue the OR State Fire Marshal's Office's offer to provide a Type III engine to one fire district in Tillamook County.
 - The apparatus would be owned by OSFM, but the district will be able to use it at any time it is not deployed on wildfire assignment
 - No purchase cost to district but responsible for repairs and maintenance

- Competition from other districts will be high
- Will take at least a year to finalize contract
- Can expect it out all fire season
- Cannot functionally replace Engine 1314
- Purchase a WUI Engine
 - No loss of capabilities versus Type I engine
 - Deployable on conflagration deployments as either Type I or Type III; allows wildland deployment with maintaining capabilities in district
 - Still considerably lower cost than replacing structural engine but higher than a Type III.
 - Cost estimated provided assuming a \$450,000 loan nothing down 2.98% APR, 3,5,10, and 15-year options.
- Wait to replace 1314 as scheduled
 - No acquisition cost outflows for 5 years
 - Old apparatus with inadequacies front line
 - Limits wildfire response opportunities
 - Risk of dramatically increasing acquisition costs in 5 years.
 - Cost estimated provided assuming a conservative 3% price increase each year, FY 2026-27 purchase price would be \$638,000.

Beswick also provided a SWOT Analysis for Option 3, and he recommended that the District procure a WUI (Option 3) as a replacement to 1314 as soon as possible. He has been in touch with a sales organization who could provide a Rosenbauer Timberwolf Pumper Truck, currently in production, in the fall; the district would need to make a payment of \$2,500 to secure the purchase option. The District's 2021-22 budget for capital expenditures is \$0. Although financing can be arranged so that the first debt service payment will not come due until Fiscal Year 2022-23, Budgeting Law would require the district to perform a supplemental budget to account for the Financing Sources to allow the delivery of the apparatus in the current fiscal year. Coyle pointed out that in prior fiscal years, the district was earmarking around \$390,000 annually for bond debt service and commitment for its early payoff.

Beswick also addressed the fate of 1314 once the new apparatus is in service. One option would be to find a suitable location in Wheeler to store the vehicle to have an apparatus to serve that area in the event the locality is isolated due to an event or disaster. Another option would be to surplus the apparatus; Beswick estimates the district could get \$10,000 for the vehicle.

Discussion ensued. Handler indicated it makes sense to buy now versus later with costs estimated to increase 5% annually. Steele stated the WUI aligns with the District's needs, and he does not see the need to send the apparatus to wildfire conflagration deployments to get incremental revenue to offset purchase costs. Sims brought up qualified resources to drive the apparatus. Forster added that the call for wildfire suppression will only increase given current climate conditions. Steele would like conflagration deployments to be on a case-by-case basis. The Board agreed that retaining the apparatus in Wheeler does not make sense operationally.

Bridge made a motion to make a payment up to \$5,000 from the General Fund's Material and Services Contingency budget to secure a purchase option for a Wildland Urban Interface Engine. Forster seconded. Handler called the question. Motion passed unanimously.

A supplemental budget will be prepared to account for the purchase of a WUI and a future supplemental budget hearing will be scheduled.

B. REVIEW OF STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2023

Beswick provided the board with a copy of the 2018-2023 strategic plan with his comments; the plan noted which benchmarks are complete, in progress, and incomplete. He noted that although it is a five-year plan, no benchmarks had a targeted date beyond 2020. Areas Beswick commented on included firefighter rank progression path, volunteer exit interviews, out-of-district volunteer program, apprenticeship program, health and wellness program for staff and volunteers, and community outreach.

Beswick recommended the plan be updated and revised to reflect completed items, new benchmarks be set for incomplete items, and new items to be addressed in the next two years be added. He further recommends that a full strategic planning process be completed no later than January 1, 2023, and the resulting plan should be for three years.

Discussion ensued and ideas were brought forth, including outreach to former volunteers to find out their reasons for leaving and perhaps partnering with an NCRD trainer create exercise programs utilizing the District's current fitness equipment.

C. SALARIED EMPLOYEE PAY FOR EMERGENCY DEPLOYMENT

Beswick summarized how the district gets reimbursed for personnel costs for individuals sent on state-declared conflagrations or other disasters and the pay rates that go to the deployed employees and volunteers. Employees and volunteers are paid for every hour from departure to return. In the unlikely event that the Fire Chief gets deployed, as a salaried individual he does not get any eligible pay. Beswick recommended that if a salaried employee on a state-declared emergency, the employee receives the extra pay reimbursed by the state beyond what would be considered pay for a 40-hour work week.

Sims made a motion to pay salaried employees at the hour rate reimbursed by the state when deployed on state-declared emergencies. Forster Seconded. Handler called for the question. Motion passed unanimously.

D. REVIEW OF POLICY 9.8 – EARLY RETURN TO WORK

Policy 9.8 – Early Return to Work, was adopted in 2009; it outlines the District's commitment to accommodating injured or ill personnel by providing alternative or modified work assignments during their recovery. He corrected a few scrivener's errors in the policy and changed some working for clarity. He noted the modifications did not alter the meaning or content of the policy and feels that a second reading is unnecessary.

Vice President Sims made the motion to adopt Policy 9.8 – Early Return to Work Program, as presented. Treasurer Forster seconded. President Handler called the question. Motion passed unanimously.

VII. REVIEW / SET NEXT MEETING DATE

The next monthly board meeting was scheduled for September 9, 2021, at 3 p.m.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT


President Handler adjourned the meeting at approximately 4:10 p.m.

MINUTES APPROVED BY BOARD
September 2, 2021

ATTEST:



Charles Bridge, Secretary



John Handler, President